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## Viewing cable 05LIMA2185, REGIONAL PRESIDENT YEHUDE SIMON: MOVING AHEAD ON

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- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

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Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
<a href="#">05LIMA2185</a>	<a href="#">2005-05-13 22:28</a>	<a href="#">2011-08-30 01:44</a>	<a href="#">CONFIDENTIAL</a>	<a href="#">Embassy Lima</a>

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 LIMA 002185

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/11/2015

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [ETRD](#) [ECON](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: REGIONAL PRESIDENT YEHUDE SIMON: MOVING AHEAD ON  
NEW HORIZONS; UNLIKELY TO RUN FOR PRESIDENT

Classified By: Ambassador Curtis Struble for Reason 1.4 (B, D)

**1.** (C) SUMMARY. Lambayeque Regional President Yehude Simon briefed the Ambassador 5/4 on the extensive consultations he has carried out to smooth the way for the SOUTHCOM New Horizons Exercise anticipated for next year. Simon expressed confidence he would win a referendum on creating a northern macro-region together with Piura and Tumbes; he said this would speed the pace of foreign investment, with the U.S. being welcome to participate. Simon voiced support for the Andean Free Trade Agreement, although he has concerns with agriculture and IPR. He said it was very unlikely he would run for President of Peru in 2006. END SUMMARY.

**2.** (U) The Ambassador met with Lambayeque Regional President Yehude Simon in Chiclayo on May 4. Simon began by expressing satisfaction with the nine-day MEDRETE (Medical Readiness Training Exercise) being carried out in Chiclayo and environs by the 96th Medical Group from Maxwell Air Force Base. Simon explained that he had not visited the exercise himself because he didn't want to politicize the event by giving the impression he was taking credit for it. Nonetheless, he had seen to it that the MEDRETE was well-publicized, and had publicly voiced his support for the initiative.

**3.** (C) Simon also commented on his efforts to prepare the way for the SOUTHCOM New Horizons Exercise (NH-06) which may take place the second half of next year. He said he had consulted with Defense Minister Chiabra and with the local military commander, and felt he had a good rapport with each. He has also reached out to NGOs, in particular Peru Solidarity Forum (which has done important work in Lambayeque with European and Japanese donors), and the Legal Defense Institute (IDL). He said IDL head Ernesto de la Jara supported carrying out NH-06 in Lambayeque, as did Social Democratic Party leader Susana Villaran.

14. (C) Simon said the congressional delegation from Lambayeque was also on board, and even leftist Congressman Javier Diez Canseco, although opposed to NH-06, would not undermine it. (NOTE: Diez Canseco was primarily responsible for torpedoing a proposed New Horizons Exercise in 2003, denouncing it as an attempt to establish a U.S. military base in Peru's coca zone. END NOTE.) In discussions with local mayors and school directors, Simon said he had received an 85-90 percent positive response. Once a public announcement of NH-06 became imminent, he also intended to brief a sympathetic group of media executives. The Ambassador confirmed that planning for NH-06 was still on track, and that once all of the funding commitments were secured (hopefully in the near future), we would be prepared to join in a public roll-out.

15. (SBU) The Ambassador asked about prospects for creating a macro-region in the north, which would lend a measure of unity to the regional governments' dealings with the national government. He said that in a visit to neighboring Cajamarca, he had noted differences between the attitudes of regional officials, who opposed a macro-region, and local businessmen, who saw the need for integration. Simon said that the referendum on a macro-region was set to take place in October, and that this would include participation by Cajamarca, since a sufficient number of voters had signed on to petitions.

16. (C) Simon said he had always had two strategies for the formation of a macro-region, one looking east toward Cajamarca and Amazonas, and the other looking north to Piura and Tumbes. No matter what happened with Cajamarca, he expected the fusion with Piura and Tumbes to take place, despite initial opposition at the national level from the APRA party, which controls both regional presidencies. APRA sees Simon's Humanist Movement as a serious political competitor in the north. APRA leader Alan Garcia had, Simon asserted, thought he could block the macro-region but was estranged from fellow party member Cesar Trelles, Regional President of Piura. Trelles decided to buck orders from above. Garcia now understood his poor position and had just asked to meet with Simon. (The latter had agreed, but the meeting hadn't taken place at the time of the Ambassador's meeting with Simon.) Simon felt a macro-regional administration would speed even further the growing pace of foreign investment in northern Peru, and said he welcomes greater U.S. presence as part of this process.

17. (C) The Ambassador gave an overview of the status of negotiations on the Andean Free Trade Agreement (FTA). Simon said he had some concerns about how the FTA would affect agriculture and intellectual property rights, but overall he was a supporter. He said he had told Prime Minister Ferrero that the GOP needs to do a better job of coordinating its message on the FTA, and he emphasized the need to focus on the implementation phase, in particular to ensure that fears about small companies being eaten up by larger ones are not realized.

18. (C) The Ambassador asked about the 2006 presidential race, and whether an electoral coalition might develop under the leadership of ex-President Valentin Paniagua (Popular Action Party - AP). Simon said he had spoken to Paniagua three days earlier. Simon's analysis was that Paniagua was an honest man and was seen as a conciliator, but his party was weak, and brought very little to the table in terms of being able to lead a coalition. The conventional wisdom in Peru, however, was that parties win elections, not coalitions. Paniagua had told Simon that despite his personal interest in a coalition, his backers in AP, particularly party President Victor Andres Garcia Belaunde, wanted to go it alone, calculating it would enhance their Congressional representation.

19. (C) Simon said he was aware of the interest in his own plans for 2006 and whether he would take a "leap into the void" of a presidential campaign, but commented that this was very unlikely. His priority was to fortify what he had begun with the regional government, gain more experience in guiding a successful administration in Lambayeque, and work to build the Humanist Party's strength in local elections. Susana Villaran and Drago Kasic (President of the National Independent Party) had urged him to head up a national ticket; he intended to remain allied with them, but said there was little chance he would run for President.

110. (C) COMMENT: As chief executive of the Lambayeque Region, Yehude Simon gets rave reviews from all save his most entrenched political opponents. He is a committed and compassionate leftist, but a practical manager as well, who seeks out private investment as a means to improve the lot of the region's populace. His political standing makes him an ideal choice for hosting the New Horizons Exercise. Simon's inclination toward sitting out the 2006 presidential election is probably sound, as he needs more seasoning and national

exposure to be ready for prime time. END COMMENT.  
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